



LINCOLN CHAFEE

U.S. SENATOR

RHODE ISLAND

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SENATOR CHAFEE'S STATEMENT ON THE ANNIVERSARY OF THE ARMENIAN GENOCIDE

WASHINGTON, DC -- U.S. Senator Lincoln Chafee made the following statement today on the anniversary of the Armenian Genocide:

"Yesterday marked the 90th anniversary of the beginning of the Armenian Genocide. A date of great significance for many Rhode Islanders, and growing in significance for all Americans, this day not only commemorates the atrocities of the past, but also reminds us that it must not happen again. Remembering the victims is our duty to the past and to the future.

The term genocide did not even exist when these atrocities occurred from 1915 to 1923, yet the numbers are staggering. Over 1.5 million people perished. Over 500,000 people were forcibly removed from their homes and their homeland. Armenian religious, political, and intellectual leaders were killed. Men were removed from their families and women and children were left vulnerable to deportation, kidnapping, and starvation. 132,000 Armenian orphans became foster children in American families.

It is vital for the distinct identity of every culture to be honored and celebrated. Over one and a half million Americans are of Armenian heritage, and on this day we are grateful for their many contributions to our country. Rhode Island and this entire nation continue to benefit from a strong and vibrant Armenian community."